

Government data shows US maternal deaths declined in 2022

May 2 2024, by Ernie Mundell



The number of American women who died at or soon after childbirth

declined significantly in 2022, the latest government data shows, but the rate is still higher than pre-pandemic levels.

The report from the U.S. National Center for Health Statistics found that, in 2022, 817 [women](#) died within 42 days of the end of a pregnancy "from any cause related to or aggravated by the pregnancy or its management [the definition of maternal death]."

That's a big drop from the 1,205 such deaths recorded in 2021, but still higher than pre-pandemic levels—754 in 2019, and 658 in 2018, the report found.

Still, [maternal deaths](#) were down for all races and ethnicities except for Asian Americans, where the rate remained stable, the research showed.

Age did make a big difference in risk.

"Rates in 2022 were 14.4 deaths per 100,000 [live births](#) for women younger than 25, 21.1 for those ages 25–39, and 87.1 for those age 40 and older," the report authors wrote.

Maternal mortality has been a growing concern—[one study](#) published last July found the number of pregnant and postpartum women who die in the United States has more than doubled in two decades, hitting particular racial groups especially hard.

That research found sharp increases in maternal death rates between 1999 and 2019, especially among Black, American Indian and Alaskan Native women.

"These disparities in [maternal mortality](#) are just the tip of the iceberg and tell us a lot about the [health risks](#) facing people in the states where these deaths are most likely to occur," study co-author Dr. Greg Roth

said when the study was published. He directs the Program in Cardiovascular Health Metrics at the Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation (IHME), part of the University of Washington in Seattle.

"In the U.S., maternal deaths are often caused by vascular diseases like severe high blood pressure or blood clots. So, maternal deaths share many of the same drivers as heart attacks, strokes and [heart failure](#)," Roth noted.

The new 2022 data was published as a NCHS E-stats report published online May 2.

More information: Find out more about hazards new moms face at [Yale Medicine](#).

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